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SUBJECT: DRUGS AND ELECTION CONCERNS IN GUINEA-BISSAU FOR
UNSC

1.(SBU) SUMMARY. USG Pascoe briefed the Security Council on the political and security issues in Guinea-Bissau. He focused on the preparations for the November 16 legislative elections and the growing threat of narco-trafficking. He emphasized the suggestion of the SYG's report that an international experts' panel might assist with the drug issue. Burkina Faso drafted a Presidential Statement (PRST), generally supporting Guinea-Bissau's development efforts and expressing concern for the narco-trafficking problem. Brazil, chair of the PBC effort in Guinea-Bissau, lobbied against any reference to the panel in the PRST. Guinea-Bissau itself is unenthused about the prospect of an experts' panel. The idea of an experts' panel gained considerable interest but little active support. END SUMMARY.

Pascoe Briefs UNSC-Drugs and Election Main Concerns

12. (SBU) USG for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe presented the Secretary-General's quarterly UNOGBIS report on October 7 to the Security Council, stressing the preparations in place for the "crucial" November 16 legislative elections. He noted the Government of Guinea-Bissau (GOGB) was very open in acknowledging the dangers and impact of narco-trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. He reiterated the report's concern that Guinea-Bissau is no longer merely a transit hub, but appears to be fast becoming a major market place in the drug trade. Pascoe suggested that an international experts' panel could send a message of strong international support as UNOGBIS looked for ways to help the GOGB address the drug problem.

13. (U) All Security Council members called for free, fair, and transparent elections on November 16. Additionally, all members supported the regional conference to address narco-trafficking, planned by ECOWAS for October 28-29.

Debate over Experts' Panel, What is Brazil Doing?

14. (U) The representatives from Libya, Italy, and Indonesia all stated an experts' panel would be a useful way to address the problem of narco-trafficking. The French, British, and Burkinabe representatives called for further discussion regarding the panel, while the Russian and Costa Rican representatives wanted more details and views on implications of such a panel. Only South African PermRep Kumalo stated he did not believe an experts' panel was the answer to drug-trafficking. Kumalo called for strengthening the counter-narcotics capacity of Guinea-Bissau's domestic institutions, through international efforts bolstering law

and order programs. He said, "we don't need to subject a fragile democracy to an experts' group."

15. (SBU) Burkina Faso tabled a PRST generally supportive of Guinea-Bissau's efforts on elections and economic development and welcoming ECOWAS sponsorship of a regional conference on drug trafficking. An early version of the PRST included a reference to the SYG's call for an international panel of experts to be created to consider drug trafficking and organized crime in Guinea-Bissau. Burkina Faso deleted the reference, reportedly after Brazil, chair of the Peacebuilding Commission Configuration for Guinea-Bissau, lobbied against it. Negotiations continue as some members, including the U.S., push to include language calling upon Guinea-Bissau to take relatively more responsibility for leading election and counter-narcotics efforts.

Guinea-Bissau Lukewarm to Expert's Panel

16. (U) Ambassador DiCarlo expressed USG concern over the threat of narco-trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. She called on the GOGB to account for official actions regarding the July 12 arrival of a reportedly illicit air cargo from Venezuela. She called on the GOGB to take a strong leadership role in combating trafficking. The Guinea-Bissau PermRep Cabral agreed with DiCarlo, saying in the session the GOGB needed to show leadership to address the drug problem, and he noted the GOGB was primarily responsible for the peace and security of its country. He argued, however, that Guinea-Bissau needs

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continued international assistance in order to build domestic institutions equal to this enormous task.

17. (SBU) Cabral, in the margins after the meeting, told DepPolCouns that he personally is unenthused about the SYG's idea of an international experts' panel to address the drug issue. He said Guinea-Bissau would prefer international assistance to bolster his nation's ability to target drug-trafficking and organized crime through domestic institutions.
Khalilzad